

Watching animals

Where would you build an observation hut for tourists visiting the rainforest?

First, make sure you know about the main animals that people might want to see.

Here are some examples:

Parrot

Monkey

List some others.



Choose one of these animals and name your tourist house (for example) 'Parrot house'

Now decide where your hut should be.

Should it be on a mountaintop overlooking the forest?

Should it be on a river bank, or on a boat in the river?

Should it be on the ground ?

Should it be on a tree trunk half way up a tree?

Should it be among the tree tops?

Write down why you chose your location.

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Here is an example of getting children to think about habitats.

Each animal has its own habitat. But when children see animals in zoos they might not realise that the environment they see them in is not natural at all.

So, ask children about habitats. It might be useful to start with local habitats. Where would you find a woodpecker, a badger and so on. Having established that the woodpecker and badger do not live in the same place, children can read the textbooks to find out what the habitats are of tropical animals.

From there they can decide where the hut should be. The point is, the children should have a scientific reason for making their choice, not just pluck a place out of thin air.

If you have more able children, you might also extend this idea because the food pyramid in a rainforest means that there will be more herbivores than carnivores. So it will be more productive (as a tourism manager) to encourage people to look at herbivores (parrots, monkeys and the like) because they are more numerous and so can be seen more commonly, than to look for carnivores (tigers) which have very large hunting areas and so are very unlikely to be seen.

You can take this further and ask whether there would be any point taking tourists to a hut at night, on the grounds that many animals are nocturnal. How would they see them? By turning on searchlights? By using infra-red cameras?